

Five Contemplations Before Shopping

Wanting to shop with intention, integrity, and not wanting to be consumed by consumerism, I will pause before shopping, in order to be true to a life of simplicity and moderation, aware of the impact on the Earth's resources consumerism has wrought.

I will slow down, breathe, take time to decide what I need, make a shopping list before buying groceries. Choose to shop with the eyes of understanding and compassion, where it is made, by whom, and with the intention to support local businesses and ethical businesses, and avoid buying goods with excess packaging, where possible.

Consider what I can do to make things last longer, to be creative, repair, mend; appliances, utensils, furniture, clothes. Give thought to what I can make or build myself, or borrow or lend. Buy second-hand and upcycled items where possible. Tend my own plot, allotment, or simply growbags or pots of herbs on a window sill, and enjoy growing vegetables, herbs and fruit, and establish a compost bin.

Reflect on what I already have, and base any purchases on need rather than on want, and be aware of the emotional triggers that lead to impulse buying. Recycle and dispose of rubbish with care and attention. Do useful things with unwanted stuff, find them new homes, or give them away to a charity shop. Finish what I already have, for example; using up the contents of the fridge, freezing surplus food.

Learn to appreciate and look with new eyes on the possessions and clothes I already have, rather than wanting something new. From time to time, I will try not to buy anything for a little while, and remind myself that all any of us need are three simple things;

food, shelter and love.

Lesley Collington, November 2023